

Aloha Chairs and Members of Honolulu City Council,

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Bill 10

My name is Joy Leilei Shih and I am a graduate marine biogeochemistry researcher at University of Hawaii in the Oceanography Department. I also have a Master's in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, and have been working on marine conservation efforts for many years. Both my current research and background indicate that plastic debris in the marine environment has widespread deleterious effects, and is a serious problem that must be dealt with in a timely manner, especially in places such as our Island State, where the ocean is an indispensable part of our culture and livelihood.

Plastics, especially single-use plastic bags (over 500 million a year are used in Hawaii alone), foul the beautiful landscape we call home, blowing in the wind, catching along gutters and canals, filling out burgeoning landfills, and floating by in the water. Sea turtles, sea birds, and whales are included in the countless casualties caused by ingestion or entanglement in plastics. Plastic does not biodegrade in any timeframe we are familiar with in our lifetime. The ones we have already discarded into our environment will be around much longer than plastic has even existed.

Please help Honolulu County address this needless harm. Cities and counties across the nation have taken this important step. Our neighbor islands have enjoyed a markedly more beautiful landscape following their successful bans. Indeed, as the world embarks on moving away from fossil fuels, this is an essential step. Plastic is made from petroleum, takes energy to make, and takes fuel to get shipped halfway across the Pacific.

Mahalo for your excellent leadership in considering Bill 10.

Sincerely,  
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